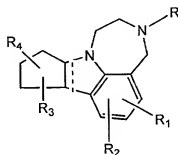


ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

This invention provides processes for synthesizing compounds of formula I:

**I**

wherein R is H or alkyl; R₁, R₂ are H, alkyl, alkoxy, halogen, fluorinated alkyl, -CN, alkyl sulfonamide, alkyl amide, amino, alkylamino, dialkylamino, fluorinated alkoxy, acyl, or aroyl; R₃ and R₄ are H, alkyl or cycloalkyl; the dashed line indicates an optional double bond; as well as intermediates and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.